

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CCO-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6569

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

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TAGS: PFOR, IT, US, CY, NATO, TU, GR

SUBJECT: ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY RELEASE ON CYPRUS CRISIS

REF: ROME 11364

1. THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ON AUGUST 23 RELEASED TO THE PRESS A LONG NOTE SETTING FORTH A CHRONOLOGY OF THE CYPRUS CRISIS AND THE ITALIAN DIPLOMATIC ACTIONS TAKEN WITH REGARD THERETO. TRANSLATION WILL BE POUCHED. THE NOTE ASSERTED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS ACTIVE WITH ANKARA AND ATHENS FROM THE OUTSET IN AN EFFORT TO PRESERVE THE PEACE, COORDINATING ITALIAN EFFORTS WITH THE US AND UK. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S LONG FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF THE COURSE OF THE CRISIS CONCLUDES WITH AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS ROBERTO DUCCI WILL UNDERTAKE ON

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BEHALF OF FOREIGN MINISTER MORO A MISSION TO ATHENS AND ANKARA.

2. LOOKING FORWARD, THE FOREIGN MINISTRY RELEASE THEN SETS FORTH THE POSITION OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO THE CRISIS, INCLUDING ITALY'S INTEREST IN THE REESTABLISHMENT OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED AND ITALY'S INTEREST IN THE STRENGTHENING OF THEIR RESPECTIVE DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES. GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER, THE RELEASE STATES THAT "ITALY CANNOT REMAIN INDIFFERENT TO THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH THE DECLARED WITHDRAWAL OF GREECE FROM THE ATLANTIC MILITARY ORGANIZATION COULD HAVE FOR (ITALY'S) SECURITY AND THAT OF THE WHOLE STRUCTURE OF THE ALLIANCE." THE RELEASE CONTINUES THAT NO CONCRETE PROBLEM IS POSED AS YET, BECAUSE THE DECISION OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET BEEN PUT INTO EFFECT, NEITHER AS REGARDS THE NATO STRUCTURE NOR AS REGARDS ANY GRECO-AMERICAN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS. THE PROBLEM, WHEN IT ARISES, MUST BE DISCUSSED RESPONSIBLY IN THE APPROPRIATE PLACES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE ITALIAN INTEREST OF SECURITY AND PEACE. TO ANTICIPATE THE PROBLEM, THE RELEASE CONTINUES, WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO TAKING FOR GRANTED A CRISIS OF NATO; A CRISIS DANGEROUS AS A DESTABLIZING ELEMENT, A CHANGE IN THE DELICATE BALANCE WHICH IS THE PRIMARY IF NOT THE SOLE BASIS FOR PACIFIC CO-EXISTANCE IN EUROPE AND THE WORLD. THE RELEASE CONCLUDES THAT A POLICIAL (I.E. NOT MILITARY) SOLUTION IS REQUIRED, WHICH WILL RESTORE CONFIDENCE AND COOPERATION AMONG ALL THE COUNTRIES OF THE AREA.

3. FOREIGN MINISTRY RELEASE HIT THE PRESS AUGUST 24, SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH REPORTS OF PRAVDA ARTICLE CONCERNING CONSEQUENCES FOR ITALY OF EVENTUAL TRANSFER OF ALLIANCE FUNCTIONS TO ITALY FROM GREECE. SUCH PROSPECT COULD ONLY "ALARM" AND "PROFOUNDLY PREOCCUPY" ITALIAN PUBLIC OPINION BECAUSE SUCH A TRANSFER WOULD RESULT IN "AN INCREASE IN ITALIAN DEPENDENCE ON THE NORTH ATLANTIC BLOC AND THE UNITED STATES," WITH DELETERIOUS EFFECT ON ITALY'S ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

4. PRESS REACTION FOLLOWED FROESEEABLE LINES. CONSERVATIVE "TEMPO" WAS SARDONIC IN ASSESSMENT OF INSUFFICIENCY OF FARNESINA'S SUPPORT FOR NATO CONCEPT, AND PRESUMPTION OF PRAVDA IN MINDING ITALIAN AFFAIRS. SOCIALIST "AVANTI" WAS CAUSTIC TOWARD FARNESINA'S LOGIC THAT ONE SHOULD NOT ANTICIPATE THE PROBLEM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EVEN THOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATE THE PROBLEM IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. COMMUNIST "UNITA" FINDS THE FARNESINA'S POSITION LESS THAN CLEAR, IN CIRCUMSTANCES THAT SEEM QUITE CLEAR TO THE COMMUNIST ORGAN. MODERATE-CONSERVATIVE "NAZIONE" GETS TO THE REAL POINT, CONCLUDING THAT IF IT NOT REPEAT NOT IN ITALY'S INTERESTS TO MAINTAN SOUND AND STRONG NATO ALLIANCE, THEN LEFT-WING AVERSION TO ANY NEW NATO OBLIGATION IS LEGITIMATE AND NATURAL. BUT IF IT IN ITALY'S INTEREST NOT REPEAT NOT TO

WEAKEN ALLIANCE, BUT INSTEAD TO STRENGTHEN IT, THEN THE (LEFT-WING) CLAMOR BECOMES ABSURD. "NAZIONE" READS THE FARNESINA JUDGEMENT IN SUPPORT OF NATO TO BE FAR FROM FIRM. "NAZIONE" CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE COURAGE OF ITS CONVICTIONS.

5. COMMENT: FOREIGN MINISTRY RELEASE WAS OBVIOUSLY A RECOGNITION OF STRENGTH OF LEFT-WING CAMPAIGN TO PRE-EMPT ANY FUTURE DECISION WHICH MIGHT BE REQUIRED OF GOI TO MEET SITUATION CREATED BY POSSIBLE GREEK WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO. THIS IS ALSO CONFIRMED BY FARNESINA SOURCE COMMENTS (DUCCI, SEPTTEL). "NAZIONE" IS OF COURSE CORRECT THAT SUPPORT FOR NATO IN RELEASE IS "ATTENUATED AND PRUDENT". FACT THAT RELEASE WAS ISSUED, HOWEVER, INDICATES GOI RECOGNIZES NEED, DESPITE DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES, TO DEFEND A KEY ELEMENT OF TRADITIONAL POST-WAR FOREIGN POLICY AGAINST SUPERFICIALLY EASY AND POLITICALLY SALEABLE LEFT-WING CAMPAIGN TO NEUTRALIZE ITALY'S ROLE IN NATO ASPECTS OF CYPRUS CRISIS. VOLPE

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